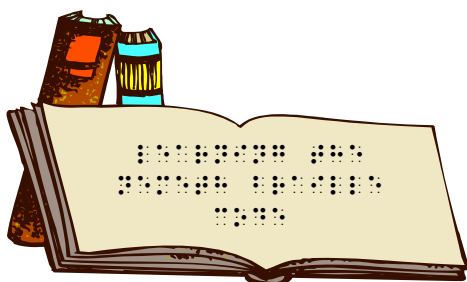# South Dakota Braillist Association Newsletter

South Dakota Braillist Association Conference Coming in April 2002

From the President, Connie Sullivan

Mathematical Braille (The Nemeth Code) and Computer Braille Code

Literary braille is used in all passages of written text. A different system, called Nemeth Code, has been developed to handle the symbols and numerals used in mathematical equations. Using the braille indicators in conjunction with the 63 braille characters, Nemeth code allows complex mathematical equations that combine numbers, variables (usually represented by letters), and mathematical signs and symbols to be written in braille.

Just as with literary braille, you are learning a new braille code.

This year's trainer will be Gloria Buntrock from Princeton, Minnesota. Gloria has provided computer-assisted transcription and braille related seminars for State agencies in Texas, Iowa, Illinois, Edmonton Alberta, Canada; Washington State; South Dakota, and Michigan. She has also provided individualized braille transcription specializing in mathematics and science braille.

In this workshop Gloria will give you explanations and examples of code rules. She will show you how to illustrate the materials involved and tell you ways to present the materials to your students.

Gloria has Library of Congress Braille Certifications in Literary Braille and Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science.

The Spring conference will be held in Yankton, South Dakota on April 8th and 9th, 2002.

Registration forms and additional information will be mailed in early March, 2002.

⠿ DOE Credit for Workshop ⠿

The SDSBVI and Braille & Talking Book Library will be submitting an application to the Department of Education for one (1) DOE renewal credit for the "Nemeth Code & Computer Braille Code" training. This would be used in the same way college credits or CEUs are used for renewal.

What's Braille
ASCII

,! ,sculptor
,i took a piece (pla/ic clay
& idly fa%ion$ x1 "o "d1
& z my f+]s press$ x1 /
,x mov$ & yield$ 6my w4

Because braille has only 63 symbols plus the space, braille embossers "read"ASCII characters differently than your line printer does. Each complete braille cell has its own ASCII symbol, many of which correspond to the letters they represent. However, contractions, numerals, and punctuation marks are quite different. If a braille ASCII file is entered into a computer without a braille font, it will look very strange. For example, the " (quotation mark) means dot 5, which is a character used to make initial-letter contractions and the , (comma) means dot 6, which is the capital sign. Dots 2-5-6, which means "dis", "dd", the period, or the dollar sign in Literary braille, appears in braille ASCII as the number 4. The word **underground** would appear like this: **"UGR.D** and the word **theater** would look like this: **!AT]** . The & symbol in braille ASCII means the contraction for "and" and the word **Andrew** would appear as **,&REW** . Interestingly, the braille code itself contains no capital letters (capitals are indicated by a dot 6 before the letter to be capitalized), but all letters appear as capitals in braille ASCII.

Some transcribers learn to read the braille ASCII symbols and proofread the braille ASCII instead of using a braille font, because the braille ASCII can be printed on almost any printer and does not require a laser printer.

Each translation program, like word processing programs, has its own set of internal codes. Files produced by one translation program are usually not compatible with other translation programs unless they are saved in braille ASCII (usually .brf) format. Most direct-input braille programs will save in braille ASCII as an optional "save as" feature.
Article from Lizgray web site.

The following chart is arranged in sections. Each section corresponds to the lines in the chart commonly used to show all 63 braille symbols. For each symbol, the braille ascii symbol is given first, the ascii decimal second, and the dot numbers third.

Line 1:			Line 3			Line 5			Line 7		
A	65	1	U	85	1-3-6	1	49	2	@	64	4
B	66	1-2	V	86	1-2-3-6	2	50	2-3	^	94	4-5
C	67	1-4	X	88	1-3-4-6	3	51	3-5	_	95	4-5-6
D	68	1-4-5	Y	89	1-3-4-5-6	4	52	2-5-6	"	34	5
E	69	1 -5	Z	90	1-3-5-6	5	53	2-6	.	46	4-6
F	70	1-2-4	&	38	1-2-3-4-6	6	54	2-3-5	;	59	5-6
G	71	1-2-4-5	=	61	1-2-3-4-5-6	7	55	2-3-5-6	'	44	6
H	72	1-2-5	(	40	1-2-3-5-6	8	56	2-3-6			
I	73	2-4	!	33	2-3-4-6	9	57	3-6			
J	74	2-4-5	)	41	2-3-4-5-6	0	48	3-5-6			

Line 2			Line 4			Line 6		
K	75	1-3	*	42	1-6	/	47	3-4
L	76	1-3-4	<	60	1-2-6	+	43	3-4-6
M	77	1-3-4-5	?	63	1-4-5-6	>	62	3-4-5
O	79	1-3-5	:	58	1-2-4-6	`	39	3
P	80	1-2-3-4	$	36	1-2-4-6	-	45	3-6
Q	81	1-2-3-4-5	]	93	1-2-4-5-6			
R	82	1-2-3-5	\	92	1-2-5-6			
S	83	2-3-4	[	91	2-4-6			
T	84	2-3-4-5	W	87	2-4-5-6			

SEE THE CLOWNS

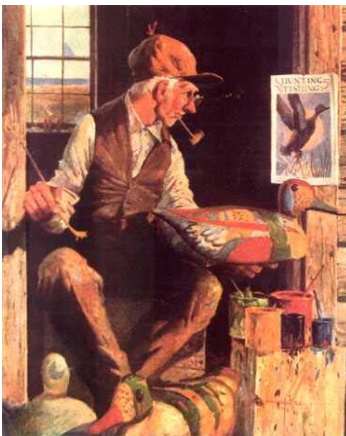A clown is like aspirin, only he works twice as fast.
Groucho Marx

Shaping
Tomorrow
Today!

The Sculptor

I took a piece of plastic clay
And idly fashioned it, one day
And as my fingers pressed it, still
It moved and yielded to my will.

I came again, when days were passed
That bit of clay was hard at last,
The form I gave it, still it bore,
And I could change that form no more.

Then I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it, day by day,
And molded with my power and art,
A young child's soft and yielding heart.

I came again when years were gone,
It was a man I looked upon,
He still that early impress bore
And I could change it, nevermore

Author Unknown

WeD-BraiLLE

What is Web-Braille?

Web-Braille is an Internet, web-based service that provides, in an electronic format, many braille books and all braille magazines produced by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS). The Web-Braille site is password-protected and all files are in an electronic form of grade 2 braille, a format requiring the use of special equipment for access.

What does Web-Braille contain?

Web-Braille contains the full text of thousands of NLS-produced braille books and all braille magazines currently produced by NLS.

Books. The books currently available through Web-Braille include press-braille books produced by NLS since 1992. A few hundred older titles are also available. Titles not included are grade 1, foreign-language, and print/braille books. NLS adds new books to Web-Braille as they are approved for shipment.

Magazines. Beginning May 2001, all NLS-produced braille magazines became available on Web-Braille. Magazine files are normally available from the Web-Braille site within one working day after the hardcopy magazines is shipped to readers.

Who is eligible to use Web-Braille?

Copyright laws require that access to Web-Braille be limited to NLS patrons and eligible institutions. Access outside the United States. Except to eligible American citizens, is not permitted.
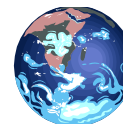
Eligible institutions include:
1. Schools for the blind;
2. Public or private schools providing braille to blind children, whether the school is set up as a special-format deposit collection or as an institutional patron; and
3. Nonprofit organization whose primary purpose is to produce braille books for the use of   eligible readers in the U.S. Some examples are instructional materials resource centers and nonprofits transcribing agencies.

Agencies may use Web-Braille files only to produce braille copies. Under current copyright law, agencies may not make large-print or unencrypted e-text versions of books without the permission of the copyright holder.

How do eligible individuals or institutions sign up for Web-Braille service?

To register for Web-Braille, eligible program users must first contact their cooperating network library and provide the library with an e-mail address and a six-to-eight character password. When the subscription is activated, the new subscriber will receive access instructions by e-mail.

How can a specific Web-Braille book be located?

Web-Braille books may be located in two ways:
1. *Online Catalog.* Links to Web-Braille books are included in the NLS online catalog (Web-BLND). This catalog is located at www.loc.gov/nls/web-blnd/advancedsearch.htm . To retrieve Web-Braille titles only, put the words "web braille" (as two words with no hyphen) in the "annotation, notes,

2. *Braille Book Review.* The web version of each issue of Braille Book Review published since July-August 1999 contains links to all new braille books available on Web-Braille. The online version of Braille Book Review can be accessed from the main Web-Braille page or from www.loc.gov/nls/bbr .

In what format are the Web-Braille files?

Web-Braille files are in grade 2 braille ASCII format. Each file represents one volume of a braille book or magazine and is named with the book's BR number and volume number and has a ".brf" file extension. For example, volume 2 or BR 12345 will have the filename "12345v02.brf".

What equipment is needed to access Web-Braille?

Web-Braille files may be read online or downloaded for viewing offline or embossing with a braille display, braille-aware note taker, or braille embosser.

Is technical support a available for Web-Braille?

Web-Braille technical support is provided through a series of "frequently asked questions." These FAQs are accessible from the main web-Braille page.

THIS CRAZY LANGUAGE OF OURS

 Let's face it—English is a crazy language. There is no egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England or French fries in France.

We take English for granted. But if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.

And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing, grocers don't' groce and hammers don't ham? If the plural of tooth is teeth, why isn't the plural of booth beeth?

Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend, that you can comb thru annals of history but not a single annal? If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preacher praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat?

In what language do people recite at a play and play at a recital? Ship by truck and send cargo by ship? Have noses that run and feet that smell?

How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man a wise guy are opposites?   How can overlook and oversee be opposites, while quite a lot and quite a few are alike?

Have you noticed that we talk about certain things only when they are absent? Have you ever seen a horsefly carriage or a strapful gown? Met a sung hero or experienced requited love? Have you ever run into someone who was combobulated, gruntled, ruly or peccable? And where are all those people who ARE spring chickens or who would ACTUALLY hurt a fly?

You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filing it out and in which an alarm clock goes off by going on.

English was invented by people, not computers, and it reflects the creativity of the human race (which, of course, isn't a race at all). That is why, when the stars are out, they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are invisible. And why, when we wind up an essay, we end it.

-   author unknow

People who fight fire with fire end up with ashes.

Dr. Alan Zimmerman's Comment:

No one likes criticism. But it's a fact of life. There's simply no way you're going to go through life without some criticism.

Of course, our culture tries to minimize the impact of criticism by saying, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." That's nonsense. Criticism always hurts. As philosopher and author Robert Fulghum says, "Sticks and stones may break our bones, but words will break our hearts."

Instead of trying to minimize the impact of criticism, I think you should try to maximize its benefit. In other words, you should try to get something out of it. Here's what you do.

DON'T SHUT DOWN WHEN YOU GET CRITICIZED.
Just because someone calls you a name does not make it so.   Don't automatically accept the other person's comment as absolute truth. And don't build a case against yourself.

Some people, when they get criticized, let it kick their self-doubts into high gear. A little voice from their negative past begins to say, "I knew it. I'm just no good at that, and I never will be". I say, "Stop it!" That won't help you get any better. It'll just keep you stuck in a rut.

By contrast, RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO FIGHT BACK WHEN YOU GET CRITICIZED. It seems so natural to defend yourself or counter attack when you get criticized, but it doesn't work.   You don't learn anything, and you don't gain anything. The criticism simply escalates in intensity -- if you fight back -- inappropriately.

So don't automatically assume the other person is being mean or malicious. Don't automatically assume that he or she needs correction. As Nick Damos says, "Never attribute to malice what can be adequately explained by stupidity."

It's like the bumper strip I saw in Daly City, California. It read "You Toucha My Car, I Breaka Your Face." I knew the driver and her companion weren't being malicious and didn't need correction when I passed them and saw two nuns in full habit.

Or it's like the snappy woman at the airline ticket counter who was complaining about the delay in the departure of her flight. "Young man," she chided the ticket agent, "The way you people run this airline, a witch on a janitor's broom could get there faster." "Madam," the agent said, "The runways are clear."

Certainly, her comment was nasty and his response was clever, but I doubt that it helped either one of them --or their businesses -- long term. You've got to resist the temptation to fight verbal fire with more verbal fire.

The same can be said for marital situations. Counter attacks don't help the situation. As Rodney Dangerfield was disciplining the dog, his wife said, "The dog is right." Counter attacks just create distance. Rodney says his wife kisses the dog on the lips but won't drink out of his glass. So be careful of shutting down or fighting back when you get criticized. Neither one works.

If you respond correctly, however, there is a lot to be gained from criticism. You just have to see the criticism as part of your education. As poet Robert Frost said, "Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence."

You need to VIEW CRITICISM AS POTENTIALLY BENEFICIAL. You could learn something about yourself. You could learn how you impact others or how you could learn how to do something differently. So let the criticism prompt a little soul searching.

You could also learn something about the one who is making the criticism. You could learn that she has some keen insight, or you could learn that she is off base. Either way, you could potentially learn something. Charles Caleb Colton said, "We owe almost all our knowledge not to those who have agreed but to those who have differed."

You'll realize the potential benefit of criticism if you LOOK FOR THE TRUTH IN EVERY CRITICISM. And there's always some truth in what people say. After all, most people don't go

around lying. When they're criticizing you, they're simply reporting what they see in you. They're reporting what might need fixing or improving in you.

Now I know some of you are going to say that some of the people around you are just plain strange. Their comments couldn't possibly have any truth in them. But I like the way Roger Rosenblatt puts it, "Just because the person who criticizes you is an idiot doesn't make him wrong." At the very least, a person's criticism carries the truth of how that one person sees you. So look for the truth in every criticism.

To do so, you may need to CLARIFY THE REAL ISSUE. For example, a marital fight about which sofa to buy is probably not a fight about furniture. More likely, it's about who makes the decisions or whose preferences are more important. If you make the mistake of thinking the fight is about furniture, you'll have the same fight next week about dining room chairs.

Clarifying an issue may take some real digging. You may need to stop and ask yourself, "Why am I getting angry or defensive?" Or you may need to ask your critic what he's feeling, what prompted his criticism, and how your behavior impacts him.

Just make sure your clarifying gets you somewhere. Don't be like the man in the hot air balloon who realized he was lost. He lowered the balloon to shout at a man on the ground and asked, "Excuse me, Can you tell me where I am?"

The man below said, "Yes, you're in a hot-air balloon, hovering 30 feet above this field." The balloonist remarked, "You must work in information technology." To which the man on the ground said, "I do. How did you know?"

"Well," said the balloonist, "Everything you told me is technically correct, but it's no use to anyone." The man below replied, "You must work in business." "I do," said the balloonist, "but how did you know?" "Easy," said the man. "You don't know where you are or where you're going, but you expect me to be able to help. You're in the same position you were before we met, but now it's my fault."
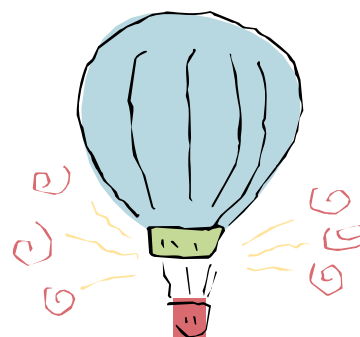
Finally, PRACTICE DETACHMENT WHEN NECESSARY. That might mean giving yourself a cooling off period before you respond to the criticism. A few hours or a few days may give you the time you need to be more objective about the issues as you sort out the truth in your situation. After all, if you respond to the criticism by saying some things you later regret, you're somewhat stuck. Even if you say you're sorry, the other person will always wonder whether or not you really meant what you originally said.

Detachment doesn't mean you're cold or unfeeling. You just recognize that you and the other person are two separate individuals entitled to different feelings and needs. The more you remember this, the easier it will be to remain calm and maintain respect for the other person.

As communications consultant Louisa Rogers said, in the early years of her marriage, she used to get annoyed at her husband when he talked about his fears. She would accuse him of overreacting. She said she realizes now that she responded that way because she lacked a strong, separate sense of self. His fears became her fears. His insecurities made her insecure. Her choices as she saw them, were either to deny his fears by getting irritated with him --- or adopt his fears wholesale. Because she lacked detachment, she couldn't listen to him and allow him to have his feelings.

You're going to get criticized in life. And you're going to get criticized at work. Just don't fight fire with fire. You're better than that. Respond with skill. Use the techniques I've outlined here, and you'll get much better results.

Action:

The next time you get criticized, stop yourself from shutting down or attacking back. Instead, look for the truth, even the little kernel of truth embedded in the criticism. Then look for a way to use that truth to improve yourself.

Have a fantastic week! Dr. Alan Zimmerman

Dr. Alan Zimmerman is a full-time professional speaker, who has given more than 3000 keynote, half, and full day programs across the country and around the world. His high energy, high content, high involvement programs help: 1) create more positive work environments, 2) where people are motivated to give their very best, 3) while working with colleagues and customers as a team.

Children's Braille Book Club

National Braille Press

We offer a new print-braille children's book every month for preschool through third grade. The same children's picture book you buy at any store is enriched with the identical text in braille embossed on transparent plastic sheets. Prices range from $4.95 - $15.96.

December Book Selection

Joan of Arc

By Josephine Poole.
Illustrated by Angela Barrett.
Print-braille edition, $6.99
For ages 9-12

"This is a true story. It happened over 500 years ago, in France..."
Children are hooked when the truth unfolds into a story as mystical, timeless, and exquisitely written and illustrated as this one. Josephine Poole aims straight for the heart of faith in this amazing story about a 13-year-old girl who hears divine voices.

"Deeply spiritual, evanescent, a haunting impression of an era, a place, and an enigmatic human being."
-*The Horn Book*
"Everyone can find a reason to love this saint. This book helps children begin to understand why she still haunts us 500 years later. I bought a copy of this book for my three-year-old son to introduce him to Joan of Arc's story, and it has been a pleasure for both of us."
-*An Amazon.com reader from Woodstock, Georgia*
"I found an excellent book about St. Joan in this illustrated copy. The text is preteen level with historical information like a timeline of Joan's life and map of medieval France, along with the text of Joan's life. This is a nice volume and I would recommend it if you wish to buy it for medieval history, religion, feminist issues, French history or all of the above."
-*An Amazon reader from Laurel, Maryland*

To place an order...
Or, to order this print-braille edition, send $6.99 to:
National Braille Press
88 St. Stephen Street
Boston, MA 02115
Toll-free: (800) 548-7323
FAX (617) 437-0456
orders@nbp.org

($5 processing fee on all agency purchase orders; no charge if prepaid. Major credit cards accepted.)

Also visit the National Braille Press new gift page - find something for every braille reader on your list Link to it from http://www.nbp.org

'Check out this web site

Bookshare.org is an online community that enables people with visual and other print disabilities to legally share scanned books. Bookshare.org takes advantage of a special exemption in the U.S. copyright law that permits the reproduction of publications into specialized formats for the disabled. Bookshare.org is expected to be fully functional in February 2002.
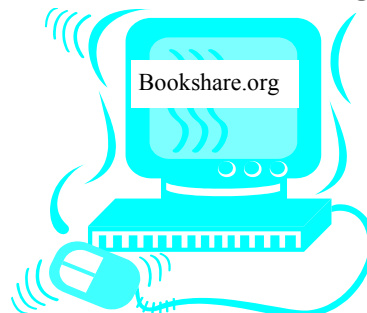
Bookshare.org will dramatically increase access to books for the community of visually impaired and otherwise print disabled individuals. This web-based platform will enable digital materials to be shared by members, avoiding the need for individuals to regularly scan books that someone else has already invested the time to scan. Scanning a book to make it accessible takes an investment of several hours. Imagine how many fewer books you would read if you had to invest several hours of work before you could start reading a book!

Who can benefit from Bookshare.org?
- People who are blind or have severe visual impairments that prevent them from reading ordinary newspaper print, even when wearing glasses or contact lenses.
- People with learning disabilities such as dyslexia which interfere with the ability to read print material.
- People with mobility limitations that interfere with holding or turning the pages of a book.

Bookshare.org will also serve organizations such as the state, local and federal educational system, the rehabilitation system, specialized nonprofit agencies and various governmental units that provide accessible materials to people with disabilities.
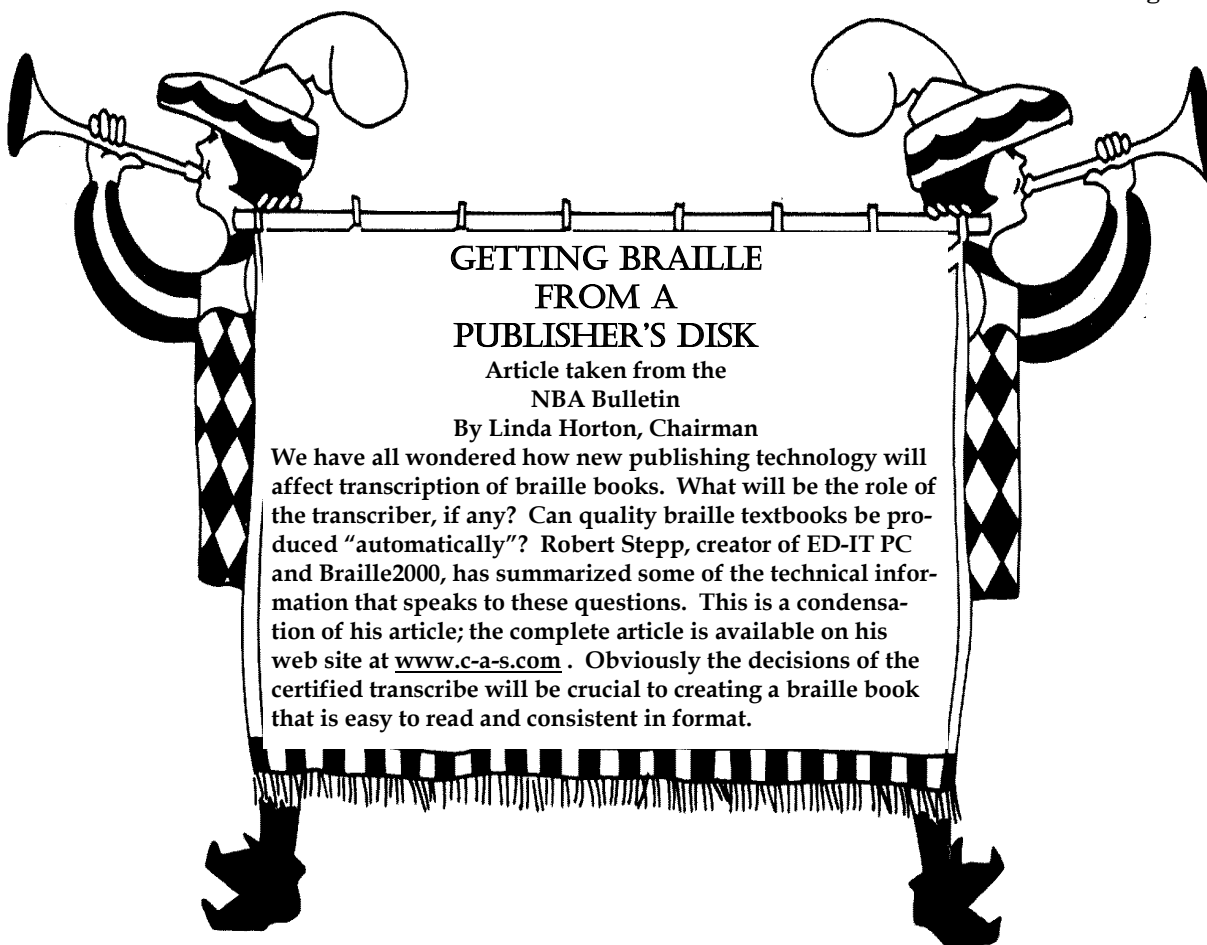
DocMorph?

What is DocMorph?

It is a free document reader that is available over the Internet. It makes
Common word processing documents and other computer files audible. So, if you have a computer, a sound card and Internet access, you can send documents to DocMorph; DocMorph will return your documents as audio files, readable with DocMorph's free speech engine."

DocMorph is TOTALLY free and requires no special software on your computer. It was developed by the National Institutes of Health and all information about it and access to it is available at:
 http://docmorph.nlm.nih.gov/docmorph/default.htm .

GETTING BRAILLE FROM A PUBLISHER'S DISK

Article taken from the
NBA Bulletin
By Linda Horton, Chairman

We have all wondered how new publishing technology will affect transcription of braille books. What will be the role of the transcriber, if any? Can quality braille textbooks be produced "automatically"? Robert Stepp, creator of ED-IT PC and Braille2000, has summarized some of the technical information that speaks to these questions. This is a condensation of his article; the complete article is available on his web site at www.c-a-s.com . Obviously the decisions of the certified transcribe will be crucial to creating a braille book that is easy to read and consistent in format.

A QUICK INTRODUCTION TO PUBLISHERS' MARKUP LANGUAGES

By Robert Stepp, Computer Application Specialties Company
Article taken from the NBA Bulletin

A textbook in the newly-proposed publishers' format called XML (for eXtensible Markup Language), is an abstract representation of the structure of the book, showing the nesting of units, chapters, sections, subsections, and various out-of-line text (such as figure captions and marginal notes, which are collectively called sidebars). To process this file automatically, a software tool is used to convert patterns of the publisher's structure markers (called "tags") into carefully selected patterns of a different markup language that describes how the text should be arranged on the braille page.

In the XML world, the tool that derives presentation from an XML document is called a "stylesheet" specification. Markup language often uses words, such as "font" or "size," followed by values that precisely determine that attribute, to specify the way the text is to be presented on the page. To keep the markup from being lost in the content, special punctuation is introduced to identify what is markup and what is content. Note that markup language (e.g., XML) can be used to specify the presentation of the text as well as the abstract structure of the book, but not both at the same time, because different sets of tags are used for each purpose.

Tags normally come in pairs, one before and one after the content text that they control. Because of this, nesting of tag-controlled regions is possible. In markup files of this type, the ending tags are always written with a / followed by the same tag spelling as that which started the markup unit, i.e., <p> and </p> to start and end a paragraph.

In text that is marked-up for presentation, most of the tags say something about how some part of the content text should be displayed—for example, "centered" or "at point size 24." These statements say nothing about the purpose or role of the text. For example, the markup can indicate that a title is centered, but not why it is centered.

Some aspects of print presentation would appear to directly relate to a braille format concept, such as "centered." But this is not totally accurate: in a textbook, centered headings in print may be used in a variety of ways, some of which might best be transcribed in other ways, such as putting minor headings out as cell-5 headings. The presentation concept "centered" does not carry enough meaning. The structure concept "subheading" tells us much more. This is why publishers' files encode the abstract structure of the book, in order to designate structural units such as "headings" and "subheadings."

One more very special thing happens in markup languages: the line boundaries no longer mean anything. When marked-up text is stored in a file, it is convenient to divide the text into lines of reasonable length; otherwise it is awkward to read and edit the file. But the line boundaries are merely for convenience and are ignored when it comes to painting the text on the screen (according to the markup directives). In a markup language, it is only the markup directives (tags) that determine how the text appears, I.e., tags determine where content lines and paragraphs divide and what fonts, color, sizes, and positions are used. For most situations, you should imagine all the lines in a markup file as being concatenated into one very long single line. Then the tags are processed to arrange the content text for viewing.

Think now about a textbook as we review. Markup that provides *presentation* will talk about fonts and text sizes and how the text should be positioned. Markup that provides *document structure* will talk about units, chapters, subchapters, headings, subheadings, paragraphs, and page numbers, without telling us just how or where those things are located on the printed page. The publishers' files will provide document structure. A tool (such as Braille2000) will use a *stylesheet* (or the equivalent) to derive braille-page presentation controls. In this way, automatic translation from publishers' XML files ought to give braille that is better formatted by the translator.

Although built from a number of simple elements, markup language files, including those done in XML, can be rather complex. There will need to be some summarizing report by which the transcriber can inspect the hierarchical nature of the book, especially to decide how to handle all the various levels of headings that appear in print.

The transcriber will perform an automatic translation of the XML file, getting formatted braille pages as the result. The generated pages of braille will then be edited by hand (perhaps during proofreading) using WYSIWYG ("What You See Is What You Get") and generalized format replacement techniques. This may entail, for example, changing all the Level 2 headings from cell-5 format to centered format, done as one operations to all the braille headings defined for that structural level.

> "A genius is a
> talented person who
> does his homework"
>
> -Thomas Edison

A free publication you may like to order that deals with the education of blind children.

"The Educator" is a publication of the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment. To order this publication by mail: ICEVI Secretariate
        Nandini Rawal
        Blind People's Association
        Dr. Vikram Sarabhai Road
        Vastrapur
        380 015 Ahmedabad, Gujarat
        INDIA

You can also use the on-line registration form on the website of ICEVI www.icevi.org

This poem was written by Dena McCaskell. Dena is Dan Boyd's daughter and her hobby is writing.

I wrote this poem as if I were actually in New York or Washington when the attacks happened and it is my view of what it must have been like for anyone who survived this terrible tragedy. As I was writing it, I was also thanking God that I wasn't there to actually witness the horror. All of you have my permission to pass this on to others if you wish to. I know we will overcome this and we will come out better than ever when this is over. This poem is kind of long, but I hope you'll take the time to read it and to thank the Lord above that you are here with your family and that you are safe. The poem I wrote is called "TUESDAY".

TUESDAY

What a beautiful Tuesday morning it started out to be
The morning sunrise awakening me.
I look at the sunshine and the bright blue sky
As I dress for work and kiss my family goodbye.

Off to work for the one hour commute
Dressed up so nice in my new business suit.
Taxi cabs, subways and even the train
Get me to work everyday, time and time again.

My thoughts are on work and the schedules ahead
Sometimes I'd rather be home instead.
But I know this is where I'm supposed to be
My job is important and brings satisfaction to me.

My office is organized and the routine is the same
Co-workers are my friends and I know them all by name.
We meet by the water cooler and greet each other with hello
Chat about the weather and kids and off to our desks we go.

We hear a loud noise - a sound like thunder rings in our ears
The sense that something is wrong is everyone's deepest fear.
No one knows what to do or even where to go
The sight of falling debris is seen outside our office window.

I'm running to the stairwell, something inside me is telling me to flee
As I glance behind I notice that everyone is following me.
There is smoke and dust everywhere and I fumble in the stairwell
I realize this is life or death and right now it feels like we're in hell.

I make it to the bottom and I run towards the outside door
Then I hear that terrible noise and realize there is even more.
My eyes are filled with dust and smoke, the tears I cannot stop
That's when I look up towards the sky and see the building top.

There is fire everywhere and the screaming never ends
I frantically search everywhere I see for my co-workers, my dearest friends.
I can't find anybody, where did they go?
There are thousands in my building and nobody seems to know.

"God, PLEASE help us!" I scream as loud as I can
But my voice is covered up, by the screams of my fellow man.
Our parents, our brothers, our children, our friends
Are all in this building as it crumbles and bends.

It falls to the ground with rescuers inside
That's when we all realize that thousands have died.
I don't know what to do, I can't even speak
My body is numb and I feel so weak.

I hear the words "terrorist, hijackers and plane"
These mad men who did this have got to be insane.
No one would kill so many innocent lives
So many friends, husbands, brothers, sisters and wives.

Who could do such a thing and why did it happen today?
I can't see the sunshine anymore, the smoke took it away.
Where is the blue sky and the cool morning air?
Why are my friends gone? This is all so unfair.

Please let me go back to sleep and start my day again
I would give anything to go back to work and hug my dearest friends.
Make this terror go away and turn the clock back an hour
So I could come to work again in this beautiful office tower.

There is nothing left but rubble and so many people are lost
Someone tried to prove something at such a terrible cost.
Such cowards they are to do something like this
To kill the innocent, the loved ones we will miss.

America is strong and our flag will be hung high
As we bury our loved ones and sadly say goodbye.
This is not over - the terrorists will pay
This day will never be forgotten and we will find you someday.

When we do, God help your soul, for all you've done that's wrong
You seem to have forgotten that America is proud and strong
We will overcome this, we will be even better than before
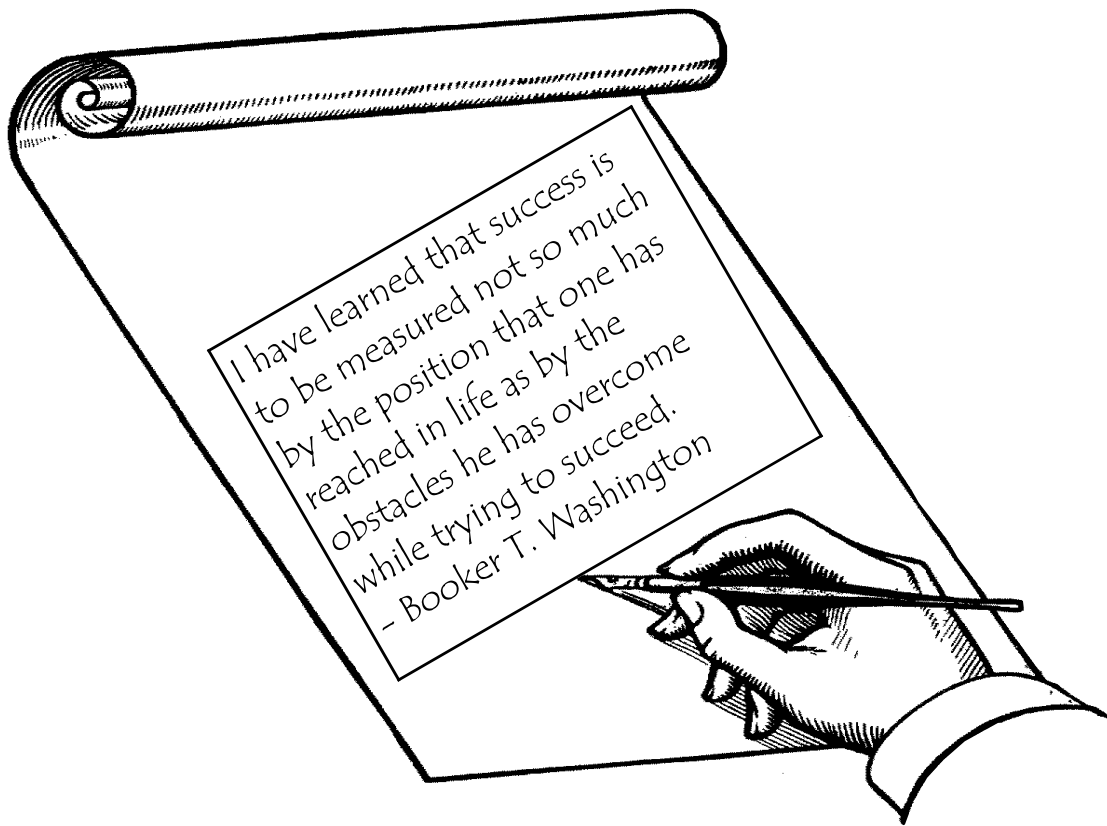And you should've known that before you started this act of war.

I will always hold close to my heart the loss of my friends and family
And forever I will be proud to be a part of America - the land of the brave and the home of the free.
That is something that you terrorists can NEVER take away from me......

Dena Boyd-McCaskell
September 2001

"'Tis the star-spangled banner, oh! long may it wave.
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave."

"The moment may be temporary, but the memory is forever."

I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles he has overcome while trying to succeed.
– Booker T. Washington

Happy Valentine Day